



**S. C. DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

P.O. Box 1993 • Blythewood, S.C. 29016  
Tel: (803) 896-7759

Shawn Musgrave  
MuckRock News  
PO Box 55819  
Boston, MA 02205

FOIA # 1310112

Date: 10/21/2013

Re: Documents related to the Dept. of Public Safety Aerial Drones

☒ The SC Dept. of Public Safety has no further information on this request. A similar request was submitted by your agency in February of this year. Attached is the same information you received then. The department proposed purchasing drones but the request was not approved and no drones were purchased by the department.

☐ ATTACH A COPY OF THE ACCIDENT REPORT (TR-310) AND RESUBMIT.  
This report can be obtained from the **S.C. Department of Motor Vehicles,**  
**P.O. Box 1498, Blythewood, SC 29016. (<http://www.scdmvonline.com/>)**

☐ Your request is not a proper request under the Freedom of Information Act because it seeks records for the defense of a criminal matter. These types of requests require a Rule 5 and/or Brady motion. Please serve the appropriate request(s) on:

Office of General Counsel  
Attention: Paralegal  
P.O. Box 1993  
Blythewood, SC 29016

☐ Please find enclosed the information that you have requested.

If you have any questions, please call me at (803) 896-7759.

Thank you,

Ada Schmidt  
FOI Coordinator  
South Carolina Department of Public Safety  
Communications Office  
[foia@scdps.gov](mailto:foia@scdps.gov)

1310112

October 15, 2013  
South Carolina Highway Patrol  
South Carolina Highway Patrol  
P. O. Box 1993  
Blythewood, SC, 29016

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, I hereby request the following records:

All documents created from January 2005 to the date this request is processed related to the agency's use of aerial drones, remotely piloted vehicles (RPVs), remotely piloted aircraft (RPAs), unmanned aerials (UAs), unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and/or unmanned aerial systems (UASs)(hereinafter "drones").

Please search specifically for the below document categories, and respond to each of the categories and items:

1) Acquisition documents:

i) requests for proposals (RFPs), proposals/quotes submitted by vendors, contracts, leases, budget requests, project/equipment budgets, cost allocations or reimbursements for the purchase of drone equipment;

ii) Grant applications and award letters for drone equipment purchases;

iii) Insurance contracts for all drone equipment;

iv) Communications (including electronic communications) between the agency head or agency quartermaster (or individual responsible for equipment purchases and maintenance) and drone vendors, manufacturers or retailers;

v) Communications (including electronic communications) between the agency head and agency quartermaster (or individual responsible for equipment purchases and maintenance) regarding acquisition, lease or use of drone equipment;

vi) Communications (including electronic communications) between the agency head and the governor, mayor and city/town manager regarding the acquisition of drones;

vii) Applications (including all components and support documentation) for Certificates of Waiver/Authorization (COA) from the Federal Aviation Administration, as well as COA grant notifications and final agreement;

viii) Contracts for services related to drones, such as data storage, data analysis, image storage, image analysis, video storage, video analysis, operation, maintenance;

2) Equipment logs:

i) Inventories/logs/lists/databases of all drones owned, leased or operated by or for the agency;

ii) Maintenance logs for all drones owned, leased or otherwise operated by or for the agency;

3) Policy documents:

- i) Policies, guidelines, protocols, manuals and/or instructions on the use/operation of drones and usage of data, images and video obtained from drone flights;
- ii) Communications from the agency head, quartermaster (or individual responsible for overseeing equipment purchases and maintenance) on approved uses for drones;
- iii) Memorandums of understanding (MOUs), memorandums of agreement (MOAs) or any other agreements or contracts with other government agencies, private corporations, organizations or individuals to share drone equipment, data, images or video or to operate drones on behalf of the agency;

4) Training documents:

- i) Curriculum used to train drone operators and observers;
- ii) Training log for all drone operators and observers;
- iii) Certifications of training completion for all drone operators and observers;
- iv) Contracts, purchase orders, budget requests or reimbursement orders for training sessions for all drone operators and observers;

5) Usage documents:

- i) Flight logs for all drone flights, including training flights;
- ii) Flight logs transmitted to the Federal Aviation Administration pursuant to Certificate of Waiver/Authorization (COA) requirements;
- iii) Reprimands relating to drones, including misuse of equipment and failure to properly maintain equipment.

I also request that, if appropriate, fees be waived as I believe this request is in the public interest. The requested documents will be made available to the general public free of charge as part of the public information service at MuckRock.com, processed by a representative of the news media/press and is made in the process of news gathering and not for commercial usage.

In the event that fees cannot be waived, I would be grateful if you would inform me of the total charges in advance of fulfilling my request. I would prefer the request filled electronically, by e-mail attachment if available or CD-ROM if not.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation in this matter. I look forward to receiving your response to this request within 15 business days, as the statute requires.

Sincerely,

Shawn Musgrave

Filed via MuckRock.com

E-mail (Preferred): 8242-74956018@requests.muckrock.com

For mailed responses, please address (see note):

MuckRock News

DEPT MR 8242

PO Box 55819

Boston, MA 02205-5819

PLEASE NOTE the new address as well as the fact that improperly addressed (i.e., with the requester's name rather than MuckRock News) requests might be returned by the USPS as undeliverable.



# SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY PATROL

## EMERGENCY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Leroy Smith  
Director



M. R. Oliver  
Lieutenant Colonel

### REMOTE CONTROLLED HELICOPTER PROPOSAL

#### Problem Statement:

Currently, when investigating a collision, we can only use allied agencies' helicopters in order to obtain aerial photographs and videos of a collision scene.

Why is this a problem? Aerial photography provides a unique perspective that is unmatched in effectively providing data and describing a collision scene. Currently, MAIT uses mapping tools and software in order to provide a scale diagram. This method, though tried and true, consumes precious times that affects traffic, as interstates remain blocked for hours. Many times this requires the use of resources from police and sheriffs departments, fire departments, and the Department of Transportation. In order to obtain aerial photographs and video, MAIT utilizes resources from the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the Charleston County Sheriffs Department, and other entities that possess aviation equipment. This is expensive and may not always be at our disposal.

We touched on the Traffic Incident Management issue briefly, but understanding what we know now about effective traffic management, we are obligated to explore ways to decrease interstate blockages. Not only is it important that we collect evidence to support prosecution in traffic fatalities, but it is imperative we manage the collision scene effectively, to mitigate collateral crashes that have the potential to result in injury or death. The longer an interstate highway remains blocked, the greater the chance of secondary collisions occurring.

Why is Traffic Incident Management Important? (*National Traffic Incident Management Coalition*, page 1 sidebar)

- Incidents are estimated to cause between 53% and 58% of total delay experience by motorists in all urban areas
- Crashes that result from other incidents make up 14%--18% of all crashes. These secondary crashes are estimated to 18% of deaths on the freeways.



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- In 2002, approximately half of police, EMS, and firefighter fatalities occurred as a result of transportation incidents. About 10% of firefighter and nearly 8% of police officer deaths were caused by a worker being struck by a vehicle.
- Nearly 10,000 police cars; 2,000 fire trucks; and 3,000 other service vehicles are struck going to or at a traffic incident.
- In 2002, traffic incident management programs, including surveillance cameras and service patrols, reduced congestion in 56 urban areas by 117 million hours. The annual cost saving resulting from traffic incident management programs in 75 urban areas was estimated to \$2.3 billion.

### **Mission Support:**

We request funding to purchase two (2) remote controlled helicopters. These helicopters will assist with taking photographs and videos of collision scenes. Not only does this provide obvious benefits for prosecution, it will provide data to create scale diagrams using reconstruction software. This benefit provides a reduction in man-hours, because it takes much less time to fly the helicopter over a scene instead of mapping the scene with traditional tools. This means the roadway opens faster, thereby reducing traffic delays and secondary collisions. Estimates show that for every minute a lane of an interstate highway is closed, it causes six minutes of congestion. The reduction of on-scene time is also safer for all personnel involved. Prosecutors will also benefit by this new information and technology. They can use the pictures and video to better present a case criminal against a defendant. This will also lead to a higher conviction rate and reduced collisions and fatalities statewide.

The helicopter will also provide photographs and video of currently inaccessible areas. It will also provide support and photographic evidence for hazardous material scenes, such as the Graniteville incident in Aiken, South Carolina in 2005. We can assist allied agencies on an as needed basis in order to provide surveillance and photographic evidence in a variety of scenes.

The purchase of two (2) helicopters provides immediate support to the entire state. Deploying these helicopters throughout the state will aid in evidence collection, and reducing the amount of time an affected interstate highway is closed.

The cost for this platform is \$6,500.00, for a total of \$13,000.00 for the pair.

### **Performance Measurement:**

MAIT will utilize the helicopter in all applicable areas, mainly the areas of the greatest traffic congestion, in order to reduce the time constraint on the investigators and the motoring public, while reducing the potential of secondary collisions.

MAIT will also provide statistical information about the usage and benefits of the helicopter, to include the time it takes to complete the scene documentation and the subsequent opening of the collision scene.



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